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work in the different countries. Reports are available from France, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Russia, Greece, Spain, and Japan. France is by far the leading country. Bills forbidding deforestation of slopes were issued there as early as 1718 and 1753. The present laws date from the middle of the 19th century, the last of April 4, 1882, requiring a survey and division into so-called "périmètres" of all the Alpine, Cevennes, Plateau Central, and Pyrenees districts. Endangered perimeters are bought up by the State and then improved. The towns and the land-owners contribute toward the cost of the improvement, if they are directly benefited by it. Up to 1892 the work achieved included the reforestation of 82,429 hectares of land, the building of 384 first-class, 1,906 second-class, and 17,539 "rustic" dams, the regulation of 340 kilometers of brooks and the draining of 218, the building of 3,875 kilometers of roads, and of 978 kilometers of fences, at a total cost of 27½ million of francs. Switzerland and Austria are next, both in legislation and in the extension of the work; in Germany there used to be need for it only in Alpine districts, but similar work has recently been started in the basin of the Oder, whose floods have been the most destructive in the empire during the last decade. In the other countries, including even Italy, with its large share of Alpine territory, the work is still in the initial stage, while Japan has developed some methods of her own, and adopted others of European origin, whose combination has resulted in some quite remarkable work.

M. K. G.

Handbuch der Erdbebenkunde. Von August Sieberg, Erster Assistent am Meteorologischen Observatorium in Aachen. Mit 113 Abbildungen und Karten im Text. Braunschweig, Druck und Verlag von Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn. 1904.

This book is intended, according to an introductory note of the author (*a*) to give a summary of the most important facts, principles, and problems of seismology for the information of the non-specialist, and (*b*) to furnish the specialist with a working knowledge of modern methods and apparatus for seismological work. This two-fold purpose practically divides the book into two quite different parts, each of which must be judged from its own point of view. As a separate unit each part ranks with the best that has been published in this line. The introduction and Chapters I and II form the general part. They contain a presentation of seismic phenomena which any one desirous of a well-balanced general information on the subject will easily understand and enjoy. Eminently readable, and free from technical detail, it reminds one of Geikie's class-books, in that it proves that often the best introduction into the elementary aspects of a science can be given by the scientist who knows best how to discern between the essential and the more secondary aspects of the subject. In a brief but complete and satisfactory way, scholarly in spirit and simple in presentation, the main phenomena of seismic activity are discussed, the geographical distribution of earthquakes, both on land and beneath the sea (the latter called "seebeben", sea-quakes, in opposition to earthquakes proper), their causes, foci, epicentra, transit, duration, intensity, frequency, effects, and minor phenomena accompanying the shocks.

The second part, embracing Chapters III and IV, contains descriptions of the various seismic instruments, directions for their use, and hints for their value under various conditions, formulas for seismic calculations, practical suggestions on the collection of seismological data and how to work up the statistical material gathered from various sources, and the like. It is exclusively a guide for working seismologists, and the question may not be out of place whether it would not be wiser, after

all, in a new edition, to publish these chapters separately as a manual for seismic observations and replace them in the book by a reduction of their contents to the scope of the preceding chapters. Such a change might greatly increase the saleability of the book, since the general part is of only limited value to the professional seismologist, who, when in need of a reference, is likely to consult a larger hand-book, while the general reader may not be willing to pay for the whole of such an expensive book when only one half is within the limits of his understanding.

The last chapter (V.), untechnical again, contains a general survey of the history, present tendencies, modern methods, and practical application of seismology, including reports on the work accomplished in the various states of the civilized world, a list of the existing seismological stations and their apparatus, and reports on the proceedings of the first two International Seismological Conferences, in 1901 and 1903. Two indices, one of names and one of subjects, greatly add to the usefulness of the book for the reader; and so do reference tables, for the calculation of distant tremors for the scientist. The book is well illustrated with pictures and diagrams, which, among a number of well-known typical illustrations, include also much that is not found in the average text-book.

M. K. G.

Actual India. By Arthur Sawtell. viii and 120 pp., map and index. Elliot Stock, London, 1904.

It has been impossible hitherto to get a clear idea of the somewhat complicated system of British government in India without the uninspiring labour of consulting a number of large books, including official publications. Perhaps the difficulty of obtaining this knowledge may explain the phenomenon to which Lord Curzon recently referred when he said he sometimes thought that the most remarkable thing about British rule in India was the general ignorance about it in England. This little book gives just the information that is needed to make clear the methods of British rule and the fundamental policies that shape the measures of the Indian Government and direct its work.

After an excellent chapter on the geography of India, the book sketches the leading features of the Indian administration of to-day, shows its relations with Britain, the nominal control of Parliament, what the Government consists of both on its executive and its legislative side, describes the Provincial Council, local self-government, the India Civil Service, the district as the unit of administration, and other features, from the Viceroy, Governors, and Judiciary to the Collectors of Districts. Such topics as the defences of India, its foreign policy, the cost of government, "The Prosperity Problem," industrial development, and English influence have each a chapter to themselves. The book is not merely a compendium of facts, for the author is avowedly an admirer of the British system in India, and his pages evince some of his enthusiasm; but he avoids partizanship, and his work will fill a void that is felt by all who wish to have an intelligent idea of Indian affairs.

Kleines Orts-Lexikon von Oesterreich-Ungarn. Von Dr. K. Peucker. x und 142 Ss. Artaria & Co., Vienna, 1904. (Price, K. 2.50.)

The third edition of a little book that is convenient to handle and is packed with information about the towns of Austria-Hungary. It gives the name of every place of 2,000 or more inhabitants, and of all other places of importance for tourists, commerce, or communications, with much condensed information, including the height above the sea. Towns of more than 15,000 inhabitants have detailed tables showing the movement of population in each district, the percentage of growth or loss, and many other facts.